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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000452

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SUBJECT: CONGOLESE MILITARY PROPOSES REDEPLOYMENT, RENAMING  
OF INTEGRATED BRIGADES

REF: A. KINSHASA 280  
[B. KINSHASA 411](#)

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary: Congolese military (FARDC) officials have proposed the redeployment and renaming of the army's Integrated Brigades (IBs). Most IBs will remain concentrated in eastern DRC where the biggest security risks remain, although the proposal suggests moving two brigades currently stationed in Ituri District to other locations. There is no mention of the so-called "mixed" brigades of North Kivu, keeping open the question of their integration into the FARDC. The proposal provides an interesting window into one senior officer's defense priorities. End summary.

[¶2.](#) (C) Post has obtained a copy of a proposal, signed by FARDC Land Forces Commander Gen. Gabriel Amisi, outlining the redeployment and renaming of the military's current fourteen Integrated Brigades. The proposal leaves most IBs in their current locations, concentrated primarily in the eastern regions of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri District, where the largest threats from armed groups remain. Just three existing brigades, plus one currently undergoing formation in Kisangani, are expected to be stationed in western DRC.

[¶3.](#) (C) There is no confirmation the FARDC or Ministry of Defense is implementing the proposal. When we showed Amisi's plan April 6 to Vice Minister of National Defense Nelson Paluku, he claimed never to have seen it. He did allow that there are discussions underway about the restructuring of the military, which may very well include redeploying units to better serve the country's defense needs. He acknowledged that the DRC requires a significant military presence in the East, but that some brigades would likely be sent to other areas.

[¶4.](#) (C) Under Amisi's plan, the most significant proposed change would be in Ituri District, where there are presently four IBs. The 4th IB would be redeployed to Boma in western Bas-Congo province, while the 13th IB would be sent to Kolwezi in southern Katanga. The two IBs remaining in Ituri would be the 1st, some of whose members have been convicted of executing civilians and of other human rights abuses (ref A), and the 6th, whose commander has been accused of close ties to militia leaders.

[¶5.](#) (C) No changes are apparently planned for North Kivu, where there are two IBs: the 2nd and 9th. The plan makes no mention of the five so-called "mixed" brigades (units combining troops loyal to renegade General Laurent Nkunda and others loyal to the government) deployed in the southern part of the province. Paluku told us there is in fact no timeline

for integrating the "mixed" brigades. He claimed the FARDC does not presently have the funding or personnel to run the integration centers properly; thus, sending the "mixed" troops for integration would result in overcrowded centers with disaffected soldiers. Paluku added that even before sending the "mixed" brigades to integration, the soldiers themselves must spend more time working together, since they had been fighting one another as recently as December.

¶6. (C) Military officials apparently plan to keep South Kivu heavily militarized, with the current five IBs in their present positions throughout the province. One brigade would be deployed near the Minembwe region, where dissident soldiers who have fought FARDC troops in recent months are resisting integration. Local Mai-Mai and FDLR forces are also active in South Kivu.

¶7. (C) The proposal would leave large swaths of the country relatively uncovered by the FARDC, though these areas have generally been free of recent conflict. Some provinces, including Maniema and Eastern Kasai, would have no brigades. However, northern Katanga, where local Mai-Mai forces are still active, would also be uncovered, as would most of Orientale Province west of Ituri. One brigade each would be deployed in the western provinces of Kinshasa, Equateur and Bas-Congo. A new brigade, currently finishing its training and formation, is expected to be stationed in Bandundu.

¶8. (C) Once redeployed, the plan proposed renaming the IBs would be renamed to reflect their new area of operations and redesignating them as Integrated Infantry Brigades (IIBs). For example, after the 4th IB moves to Bas-Congo -- the DRC's 2nd Military Region -- it would be rechristened the 21st IIB.

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No explanation was given in Amisi's plan as to why the brigades would be given the "infantry" designation.

¶9. (C) The following list details the DRC's current Military Regions (MRs) and the IBs deployed in them:

- 1st MR (Bandundu): no IBs currently deployed
- 2nd MR (Bas-Congo): no IBs currently deployed
- 3rd MR (Equateur): 10th IB, deployed in Gemena
- 4th MR (Kasai Occidental): 5th IB in Kananga
- 5th MR (Kasai Oriental): no IBs currently deployed
- 6th MR (Katanga): no IBs currently deployed
- 7th MR (Maniema): no IBs currently deployed
- 8th MR (North Kivu): 2nd IB in Butembo; 9th IB in Rutshuru
- 9th MR (Orientale): 1st IB in Bunia; 4th IB in Rwampara; 6th IB in Kagaba; 13th IB in Komanda
- 10th MR (South Kivu): 3rd IB in Bukavu; 8th IB in Sange; 11th IB in Walungu; 12th IB in Baraka; 14th IB in Numbi
- 11th MR (Kinshasa): 7th IB in Maluku

¶10. (C) The following list details the proposed redeployment and renaming of current and future IBs/IIBs:

- 1st MR (Bandundu): 11th IIB (formerly 15th IB, currently undergoing formation) in Kikwit
- 2nd MR (Bas-Congo): 21st IIB (formerly 4th IB) in Boma
- 3rd MR (Equateur): 31st IIB (formerly 10th IB) in Gemena
- 4th MR (Kasai Occidental): 41st IIB (formerly 5th IB) in Kananga
- 5th MR (Kasai Oriental): no proposed IIB deployment
- 6th MR (Katanga): 61st IIB (formerly 13th IB) in Kolwezi
- 7th MR (Maniema): no proposed IIB deployment
- 8th MR (North Kivu): 81st IIB (formerly 2nd IB) in Butembo; 82nd IIB (formerly 9th IB) in Rutshuru
- 9th MR (Orientale): 91st IIB (formerly 1st IB) in Bunia; 92nd IIB (formerly 6th IB) in Kagaba
- 10th MR (South Kivu): 101st IIB (formerly 3rd IB) in Bukavu; 102nd IIB (formerly 8th IB) in Sange; 103rd IIB (formerly 11th IB) in Walungu; 104th IIB (formerly 12th IB) in Baraka; 105th IIB (formerly 14th IB) in Numbi

-- 11th MR (Kinshasa): 111th IIB (formerly 7th IB) in Maluku

¶11. (C) Comment: The proposal is a revealing look at a senior military official's view of the FARDC's defense priorities. It suggests that Ituri is considered less problematic following the surrender of Peter Karim and other militia leaders (ref B), but that South Kivu is still of significant concern. The proposal tellingly says nothing about any plan to move the "mixed" brigades out of North Kivu, even though "mixage" was supposed to have been only a temporary measure.

End comment.

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